

COPY

MARK and MARY FICKETT2035 Landucci Drive
Firebaugh, California 93622

June 27, 2012

Janice Pincro, Endangered Species Act Specialist
Bureau of Reclamation, Bay-Delta Office
801 "I" Street, Suite 140
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Ms. Pinero,

Our family farms almonds, pomegranates, and a variety of row crops. Our land is situated in an area where there is no ground water to pursue by drilling wells. We are 100% reliant on the federal CVP system to supply all of our irrigation water. In order for our business to survive we need a predictable and reliable water supply. Since the implementation of the endangered species act we have experienced unbelievable hardships.

In 2009 we started our farming year with a 0% supply which caused all kinds of hardships for us. We were forced to lay off employees who ended up in food lines in Mendota and Firebaugh. Our crop financing was completely cutoff for that crop year by the company who had been financing our crops up to that point. We were forced to see more costly financing to survive. We had no row crops that year and we had to shake the almonds that did set to the ground where they were shredded up in order to qualify for a small crop insurance payment. Later in the year we received a 10% supply which only allowed us to keep our trees alive albeit in poor condition.

We are currently refinancing some of our land which is proving very difficult since we cannot produce any dependable water supply information. We need to know an approximate range of water we will be receiving from year to year. We also need to know what the district's allocation will be before April or May of any given year because we plan what crops we are going to plant in September or October of the previous year. When we plan our cropping pattern in the fall we are also preparing financing and contracting for various input like fuel, fertilizer, labor, and chemicals. Some of these inputs must be paid for at this time when we have no idea what the Bureau of Reclamation is going to declare as the allocation

We and our entire community are reliant on the water that's pumped from the delta and transported south. We are just as much a part of the delta ecosystem as the creatures and people immediately in or adjacent to the delta.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Fickett".

Mark Fickett